

**FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 11, 2016**

[Note: Planning Board had switched meeting date from 3rd Tuesday due to vacations]

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Caron, Chair
John DiPasquale
Mike DiPietro
Paul Fontaine, Jr. (7:20 p.m.)
Mike Hurley
Kristin Sweeney
Andrew Van Hazinga
Laura O'Kane (Assoc. Member)

PLANNING OFFICE: Mike O'Hara

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:09 p.m. in the Community Room, Fitchburg Fire Headquarters, 33 North St.

Meeting Minutes

Action deferred, minutes not done yet.

ANR plans

None.

MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW

Expert Pest Control, 967 South St. - Proposed garage for service trucks and vans

Jamie Rheault, Whitman & Bingham Assocs. presented plan for a 30' x 56' single-story, 4-bay garage. Height: approx. 30 feet. Will be used for storage of vehicles only, no water or sewer connection, just electrical. Retaining wall on plan will be only two feet high. No dumpster provided now, not needed. Existing building on South St. just used for office of pest control business. Will stripe parking spaces. They are willing to upgrade existing wooden stockade fence at rear of parcel to white vinyl fence (abuts residence on Olin Drive).

Motion made & seconded to approve Minor Site Plan, subject to submitting revised plan showing:

- Striped parking spaces
- Upgrade existing wooden stockade fence at rear of parcel to a white vinyl fence for the full width (83 feet) of the rear property line
- Future screened dumpster location

Vote 6-0 in favor.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

(Note: Mr. Fontaine, Jr. was not present for the following item.)

Special Permit - Mixed Used Planned Unit Development (residential & commercial) 579 South St., Gionet (cont'd from 6/21)

Mark Gionet & Bill Hannigan, Hannigan Engineering present.

Bill presented revised plan. Density has been reduced to 20 units in one L-shaped building.

Now = 5 units/acre.

Floor plans submitted for Board's review. Some of the 2-BR units have a second level.

Only two units have windows that would be on the Ashley Ridge or street side. Rear building has been relocated 123 feet to the front. Larger buffer to Ashley Ridge provided. Added a gazebo & benches & horseshoe pit.

Both Residential & office parking spaces have been reduced. Footprint of medical office has been corrected from 5,400 to 4,500 sq. ft. – that was an error on the previous plan.

No updated exterior elevations as yet. Bill is trying to get Board's OK that they are heading in the right direction with the reduced density. If so, he will finish grading, utility & landscaping plan & architect will prepare building elevations. From the street a two story building would be visible, no windows on the 3rd level. Mark: Looking to have two-tone siding w/ accents, stone, etc.

Public Comment:

Jack Hathaway, 525 South St. - Plan is an improvement, but still concerned w/ traffic.

Linda Rameau: Plan is slightly better, but will still add to traffic. Half of parcel is unusable, so density calculation is not accurate.

Beth Holland, Norval Ave. - Better, but there's still a safety concern.

Paul Fontaine, Sr., South St. - Plan is going in right direction, but he needs to go further. Any # of units would work & still make a profit if done right. He asked to save as many trees on site as possible.

Linda Rameau suggested completely enclosing dumpster, like at Ashley Ridge - enclosed gazebos.

Frank Worthley, Ashley Ridge: Will still be a traffic problem.

Mr. Blaquere: Can dumpster near him be moved? Bill, yes, but is for office waste (paper, etc.) only. They will move apartments' dumpster to rear of building.

Current proposal: 5 1-BR units, 15 2-BR units. Some of 2-BR units would be in two levels.
Size: 1,150 s.f. 1-BR, 950 s.f. 2-BR.

Bill: There will be a re-hearing before Conservation Commission w/ new Notice of Intent, but not until after the Planning Board has approved the plan.

Board discussion:

Mr. Van Hazinga appreciates efforts, plan has come a long way from initial plan, let's finish it out.

Mr. DiPasquale: Eliminate the 2nd level on some units? Ms. O'Kane - Plan is getting better.

Ms. Caron: Good that density has decreased and development is working w/ contours of the land.

Agreed that hearing should be continued. Due to vacations and meeting conflicts in July/August motion made & seconded to continue hearing to September 20, 2016 meeting. Vote in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

Note: Mr. Fontaine arrived during the next item.

Concept plan - Compassionate Organics, 25 Newport St. (7:10 p.m.)

Geoffrey Reilinger & Eric Dellovo of Compassionate Organics, Inc. in to informally discuss proposal to establish a medical marijuana cultivation & processing facility at 25 Newport St. (currently ROI Industries, formerly Parks-Cramer). They will occupy the 2-story wing closest to river to start. Will lease to start and eventually purchase property. They are currently in the permitting process w/ city of Boston for a dispensary in Allston. Will have 30-40 employees. Just one shift. They're willing to do preferential hiring for city residents. They anticipate just one delivery per day each way.

Access will be thru access driveway (currently blocked by chain link fence) thru the retail strip in front at 68 Airport Road. If Fire needs alternative access from Newport St, they'll work something out w/ Fire.

They're OK w/ providing white vinyl fencing for dumpster. They'll provide landscaping & screening from adjacent residential properties on Newport St. Will need waiver from Board from the Ordinance's 300-foot setback from facility where children congregate, since karate & dance studios occupy several of the commercial units at 68 Airport Rd.

They anticipate just one delivery per day each way.

They plan to submit Special Permit application for hearing in August.

Board members supported the proposal.

Discussion re: One-Lane Main Street petition to City Council

Extensive discussion. Ken Posco present to argue against the proposal to reduce to one lane.

Motion made & seconded to send a recommendation against the petition to reduce Main St. to one lane for the following reasons:

- Reduction of parking on Main St.
- Drivers attempting to parallel park on Main Street will stop traffic.
- Loading vehicles will obstruct traffic, particularly on south side.
- Ongoing utility work (Unitil, etc.) may block traffic if Main St. one-lane.
- Emergency vehicles using Main St. may be obstructed.
- Concerns regarding proposed turning patterns at Main, Water, and Day.
- Traffic bypassing Main St. may end up on other streets. Are they able to handle additional traffic?

However, if One-Lane Main Street *does* happen, the Board suggested there be an objective assessment of its effectiveness by getting baseline data on trips, turning movements, etc., both prior to and after implementation. The Board would also like to be involved in the evaluation process.

Vote unanimous in favor.

Letter rec'd from MRC re: Board's representative to MJTC (Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee). Ms. Caron agree to continue as the Board's rep.

Email from Chantell Fleck @ MRPC re: Board's sub-committee to work on a solar by-law, not formed yet. Mr. Fontaine thought Board as a whole could come to agreement on a by-law at one meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 8:45 p.m.

Next meeting: 8/16/16

Minutes approved: 8/16/16